

Still Without Face

BONN (Reuters). — Reinhard Gehlen, known as the man without a face, is retiring as head of the West German counterespionage organization which he has led since shortly after World War II.

Most people know little of him other than his name and age. For Mr. Gehlen has ruled his network of cloak-and-dagger men from behind a veil of anonymity at his headquarters surrounded by barbed wire near Munich. As far as is known, no photograph has been taken of him in the last 23 years.

The last one, taken in 1944, shows him as a balding, slightly built 40-year-old in the uniform of a Wehrmacht colonel.

Nineteen years later, the East German security service put a big price on his head—a testimonial to the effectiveness with which his post-war apparatus was already working.

after he had received training in secret service work in the first years of Nazi rule.

Linked With Eastern Front

Promoted to colonel in 1942, he took over the department called Foreign Armies East, in the army general staff, where his duties were to collect and analyze information about the enemy on and behind the Eastern Front.

When Adm. Wilhelm Canaris, head of the German counterespionage service, fell in disfavor in the same year, Mr. Gehlen set up his own counterespionage network.

Mr. Gehlen, who managed to save his massive Secret Service files in the chaos of the final weeks of a war, quickly awakened the interest of the Americans when he was captured in Bavaria.

After careful interrogation in Washington, he was sent back to Germany and given his own department to analyze information from Eastern Europe.

His work there proved invaluable to the Americans, and he was given a free hand to expand his network from a base near Munich.

After that, the veil of secrecy

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